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U.S. Department of Agriculture
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Rutgers University

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RUTGERS WEEKLY FORECAST

Rainfall amounts, none today, tenth of an inch with some locally higher amounts possible tonight and Wednesday morning then none Wednesday afternoon.

Winds for spraying, southwest around 10 mph today, southwest around 10 mph tonight, southwest then northwest 10 to 15 mph Wednesday.

Relative humidity in percent, 45 to 55 today, near 100 tonight, 40 to 50 Wednesday.

Dew points, mid to upper 60s through tonight then dropping through the 60s on Wednesday.

Drying conditions, fair to good today, possibly poor Wednesday morning then becoming fair to good by afternoon.

Frost freeze or dew, some dew as well as possible wetting in a shower tonight, heavy dew Wednesday night.

Percent of possible sunshine, 50 today, 40 Wednesday.

There is a 20 percent probability of precipitation during the 12 hour period beginning at 8 am and ending at 8 pm that could adversely affect the performance of pesticides that require a rain free period after application.

Hay cutting will see much improved drying conditions this week but there is a slight chance of a shower or thundershower tonight and Wednesday morning.

Soil moisture is now adequate to surplus in most locations.

Conditions do not appear favorable for the occurrence of cranberry scald today and Wednesday.

The latest 8 to 14 day outlook for the period September 10, 2002 to September 16, 2002 is calling for temperatures to average near normal and precipitation to total near normal.

Climate summary for the week ending 8am 09/02/02
Temperatures averaged below normal. Extremes were 87 degrees at several locations on August 28, 2002 and 51 degrees at Charlotteburg on August 31, 2002.

Weekly rainfall averaged 2.01 inches north, 4.50 inches central, and 3.15 inches south. The heaviest 24 hour total reported was 2.87 inches at Toms River on August 29, 2002 to August 30, 2002.

Estimated soil moisture, in percent of field capacity, this past week averaged 92 percent north, 90 percent central, and 85 percent south.

Four inch soil temperatures averaged 67 degrees north, 70 degrees central, and 73 degrees south.

*Departure from normal.
1/ Growing degree days since March 1, total and departure from normal or long term average.
2/ Estimated soil moisture as % of field capacity based on climate data.

AGRICULTURE

A cold front stalled over the region last Wednesday, triggering showers and thunderstorms throughout the weekend. Cooler temperatures brought some relief from the hot weather, while steady rains helped replenish farm ponds and reservoirs. However, many producers reported that the rains came too late to benefit most corn and soybean fields. Significant yield losses are expected in many areas due to the summer drought. Outdoor activities included harvesting vegetables and field preparation for fall planting. Days suitable for field work averaged 4.8. Top soil moisture was rated 49% short and 51% adequate. Livestock producers continued supplemental feeding of hay and silage. Vegetable producers continued harvesting sweet corn, snap beans, peppers, summer potatoes, and tomatoes. Producers reported problems with insects in some sweet corn and snap bean fields. Producers also reported problems with some tomato splitting, due to recent rains.

SOIL MOISTURE TABLE				RANGE AND PASTURE			
	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	PREVIOUS YEAR		CURRENT	PREVIOUS WEEK	PREVIOUS YEAR
VERY SHORT	0%	47%	0%	VERY POOR	0%	30%	0%
SHORT	49%	47%	67%	POOR	79%	58%	0%
ADEQUATE	51%	6%	33%	FAIR	21%	12%	81%
SURPLUS	0%	0%	0%	GOOD	0%	0%	19%
				EXCELLENT	0%	0%	0%

*JERSEY FRESH AVAILABILITY FOR SEPTEMBER 3, 2002

Acorn Squash – Lesser quantities still being harvested with smaller sizes being seen due to the prolonged heat. Varieties planted for fall harvest may be found in less quantity this year as some growers scaled back their planting due to prolonged high heat and low irrigation ponds.

Butternut Squash – Slightly increasing quantities are being harvested each week with smaller sizes being seen due to the prolonged heat. Varieties planted for fall harvest may be found in less quantity this year as some growers scaled back their planting due to prolonged high heat and low irrigation ponds.

Cabbage – Green, Red, and Savoy available in quality, though quantity and size has been off with the hot weather. Cooler fall weather could help the quantity pick up within the next several weeks.

Cantaloupes – The season is pretty much over for most melons.

Collards & Escarole/Endive – Good quality and decreasing quantity available now due to the hot weather. Will be available throughout the summer. Quantity and quality should pick up in the fall with cooler temperatures.

Cucumbers - Good quality and less quantity than usual available due to the heat. Varieties planted for fall harvest may be found in less quantity this year as some growers scaled back their planting due to prolonged high heat and low irrigation ponds.

Eggplant – Good quality. Volume and size has been less with the hotter weather.

Italian Eggplant – Good quality. Volume and size has been less with the hotter weather.

Sicilian Eggplant – Good quality. Volume and size has been less with the hotter weather.

Green Beans – Good quality but hot weather causing decreased volume and size variability.

Green Onions – Good quality and quantity available.

Herbs – Lighter quantities available now for Cilantro, Dill, Parsley, Arugula, and Baby Arugula with hot weather stretches causing some heat related light availability of these and other herbs. Some herbs though, like Basil, Mint, and Mustard like the hot weather and thrive in this kind of heat. Expect most herbs other than Arugula to be available all summer. Fall availability may be less as the prolonged heat and low irrigation ponds have caused some growers to scale back on their planting plans.

Leeks - Good quality and decreasing quantity of spring planted varieties being dug now. Early June planted varieties will be available in a week or two.

Napa Cabbage – Decent quantity. Volume and size has been less with the hotter weather. Hoping for cooler weather so that fall varieties mature into a quality product.

Nectarines – Fantasia is the only variety still being harvested in commercial volume now. Available until the end of the month.

Peppers – Good quality and large quantity are available. Let’s push the peppers please.

Pickles (Kirby cucumbers) – Good quality. Volume and size has been less with the hotter weather.

Plum Tomatoes – Good quantity as much ripening due to the hot weather. Good size.

Shanghai Bok Choi – Decent quantity. Volume and size has been less with the hotter weather. Hoping for cooler weather so that fall varieties mature into a quality product.

Sweet Corn – The other side of the peak of season. Quantity available for supermarket buyers (8” size) with Argent, Silver King, and Super Sweet varieties. Good wholesale availability until at least the week after Labor Day. Quantity and quality varies after that due to fall insect pressures.

Tomatoes – Good quantities though this past week’s cooler temperatures have slowed field ripening.

White Potatoes – Good quantity and quality. Growers are happy with the prices.

White Peaches - Lady Nancy variety is available in decreasing volume now. Snow Giant variety available in volume now. The flavor and color of this variety is excellent.

Yellow Peaches – All fruit being harvested now is of excellent quality. Late peaches account for about 50% of our volume so please stay with our growers for the next month. Let’s encourage mom’s to include a peach in the lunch box. There is still a lot of large fruit (2 ½”) available. Peaches will be available to first frost.

Flamin Fury and Cresthaven varieties being harvested now in small quantities. Jerseyglo and Jersey Queen varieties being harvested now in decreasing quantities with great color and size. Autumnglo, Fayette, and Encore varieties are being harvested in volume now. Encore is the most heavily planted peach in New Jersey. A few Laurol variety peaches are being picked. Only the Parade variety is still ripening.

Yellow Squash – Good quality and large quantity available. Volume and size has been less with the hotter weather.

Zucchini - Good quality and large quantity available. Volume and size has been less with the hotter weather.

**Provided by the New Jersey State Department of Agriculture.*